

WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1. A method for signaling quality of content of data provided from a source between digital devices to a receiver of the data, the data having at least one record, the at least one record having at least one data field, the method comprising the following steps:

5 assigning a grade indicative of the quality of the content of the data; and,
linking the grade to the content of the data;
wherein the receiver dynamically accesses the grade without having to access the data.

10 2. The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the step of linking further comprises associating a portion of a file name to the grade.

15 3. The method as recited in claim 2 wherein the filename corresponds to a file containing the data.

4. The method as recited in claim 1 further comprising associating a grade file with the grade.

5. The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the quality corresponds to a particular data field of the at least one data field.

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6. The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the quality corresponds to a particular record of the at least one record.

7. The method as recited in claim 1 wherein a particular quality corresponds to a particular record of the at least one record.

5 8. The method as recited in claim 1 wherein a particular quality corresponds to a particular field of the at least one particular field.

9. The method as recited in claim 1 further comprises determining the quality by using a predefined function.

10. The method as recited in claim 1 further comprises determining the quality by accessing a database.

11. The method as recited in claim 1 further comprises determining the quality by using an externally defined function.

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12. The method as recited in claim 1 further comprises determining the quality by accessing an external database.

20 13. The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the step of linking further comprises associating the grade to a data set.

14. The method as recited in claim 1 wherein a criteria for determining the quality is
customized by the receiver.

15. The method as recited in claim 1 further comprising assigning a rating as a function of
5 the grade.

16. A system for signaling quality of content of data between digital devices over a digital
network to a receiver of the data, the data having at least one record, the at least one record
having at least one data field, the system comprising:
means for assigning a grade indicative of the quality of the content of the data; and,
means for linking the grade to the content of the data;
wherein the receiver dynamically accesses the grade without accessing the data.

17. The system as recited in claim 16 wherein the means for linking further comprises
15 associating a portion of a file name to the grade.

18. The system as recited in claim 17 wherein the filename corresponds to a file containing
the data.

20 19. The system as recited in claim 16 further comprising means for associating a grade file
with the grade.

20. The system as recited in claim 16 wherein the quality corresponds to a particular data field of the at least one data field.

21. The system as recited in claim 16 wherein the quality corresponds to a particular record 5 of the at least one record.

22. The system as recited in claim 16 wherein a particular quality corresponds to a particular record of the at least one record.

23. The system as recited in claim 16 wherein a particular quality corresponds to a particular field of the at least one particular field.

24. The system as recited in claim 16 further comprises means for determining the quality by using a predefined function.

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25. The system as recited in claim 16 further comprises means for determining the quality by accessing a database.

26. The system as recited in claim 16 further comprises means for determining the quality by 20 using an externally defined function.

27. The system as recited in claim 16 further comprises means for determining the quality by

accessing an external database.

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~~34.~~ The system as recited in claim 16 wherein the means for linking further comprises means for associating the grade to a data set.

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~~35.~~ The system as recited in claim 16 wherein a criteria for determining the quality is customized by the receiver.

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~~36.~~ The system as recited in claim 16 further comprising means for assigning a rating as a function of the grade.